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*Portrait of
Françoise de Longwy*

Corneille de Lyon (1500 ?-1575 ?)

A Miniature Panel Portrait by Corneille de Lyon

**"La Seine à Chatou," by
Pierre-Auguste Renoir**

THE Museum has recently acquired an interesting miniature panel painting of the sixteenth century. It is quite possibly one of the group of portraits of great lords and ladies of the French court which Catherine de Medici saw at Lyons on her visit to the studio of the artist, Corneille de Lyon, in 1564, among which she was amused to recognize herself and many of her ladies in the costumes, then hopelessly out of fashion, of 1548, the date of the court's previous visit to the city.

The artist today spoken of as Corneille de Lyon, was known by his contemporaries as Corneille de la Haye, since he was believed to have been born at the Hague, probably about the year 1500. We do not know what drew him to Lyons, but many foreigners, Flemings and Italians among them, were attracted to this busy city of craftsmen, the Florence of France and the gateway to Italy. He was already well known to the court in 1540 when he was appointed painter to the Dauphin, and in later years he appears officially as painter to Henry II., Francis II. and Charles IX. Mention occurs of him in 1574, and it is believed that he died in the following year.

The portrait, which comes from the François Flameng collection in Paris, is that of Françoise de Longwy, the wife of Philippe de Chabot, Comte de Charny, better known as Amiral de Brion. It is probable that this portrait was painted about 1540 or 1542 when the lady was about 30 years old, although the chronicler in 1564 writes of her and her daughter, Madame de Barbizieux, as "very beautiful in old age." She is depicted here with a pensive look in her blue eyes, a smiling mouth, and blond hair parted in front and gathered behind in a *bandeau* decked with pearls. Her corsage is of rose color, décolleté with sleeves trimmed with ermine, and she wears a necklace with a double row of pearls and jewels and a jewelled pendant ending in a drop pearl.

The artist was renowned among his contemporaries for his pellucid tones, his absolutely fresh colors — of which an old *rondeau* says "a rosy hue which you would say was flesh itself." It is thought that he merely chalked in his subject in outline and brushed on his color swiftly with a single stroke, gaining an effect so smooth that the paintings may be said to be without the appearance of touch. His style is delicate, has been called calligraphic in detail, and while less bold than that of the Master, Jean Clouet (d. 1540) is, like his, French in taste and Flemish in touch, method and media. There is a delicacy of finish in this portrait which is very pleasing, such as attracts in an

*La Seine à Chatou**Pierre-Auguste Renoir (1841-1919)*

illuminated MS., but the artist's reputation depends more on one or two greater works, such as the portrait of the handsome Dame de Martigné Briant, which displays the full skill of the painter in its rosy hues, fine expression and more lifelike modeling. Corneille de Lyon has certainly presented us in his portraits with women of character. A third example is that of Anne Piesseleu, Duchess of Etampes and mistress of Francis I., whom the painter depicts with a strong and interesting face. It was she who greatly influenced the fortunes of the husband of Françoise de Longwy.

For Americans the latter has interest since by his naval position he enabled Jacques Cartier to obtain the royal permission to explore Canada in 1534-35 and to reach the site of, and name Montreal (Mont Royal). The admiral rose to great power and wealth by the aid of Anne Piesseleu, leader of the party in opposition to Diana of Poitiers, the mistress of the Duke of Orleans; but his enemies and rivals schemed for the admiral's fall and brought about in 1539 his disgrace and ruin, and although ultimately restored to favor by the aid of Anne Piesseleu, he died a year later in 1543. Françoise de Longwy is said to have bravely supported him throughout all his trials, and it seems probable that this portrait of her was painted two or three years before his death. Certainly she wears no widow's garb as we know she did after her husband's death, and the pensive look on an otherwise naturally cheerful face revealed in the mouth, suggests the effect of her husband's great trouble.

"The Seine at Chatou," by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, is the recent generous gift, by Mr. Arthur B. Emmons of Newport, R. I., of one of the most valuable paintings in his collection. Many years ago the Museum was interested in this picture, but failed to secure it. With the recent bequest of the "Grand Canal, Venice" it brings up the number of Renoirs in the Museum to two.

The painting is entitled "La Seine à Chatou," and gives a charming glimpse of meadow, river, and the distant woods of this pleasant spot, much frequented by Parisians for boating. The painter has not yet developed the full opulence of his later palette; yet we feel perfectly the spirit of the moving scene and the thrill of its pulsing air. In the portraits and groups also, in which Renoir reveals his master hand, even as he catches so deftly the fleeting emotions of the human face, it is the play of light and wealth of color which interest him, so that both portrait and landscape may be said to be harmonies of color.

Long ago Renoir's work disconcerted the critics who tried to place him. In the seventies he was an impressionist, a member of the group of Manet, Monet, Pissaro and Sisley, and his painting of that period was said to epitomize the whole of the work of that school, and yet at the same time to call up reminiscences of Watteau and Gainsborough. He has painted freely portraits, landscapes, still life, and group scenes from modern life, but his versatility is not merely confined to the subject matter. His constant desire to learn, to experiment, his indefatigable zeal for progress have

carried him further than any one school, and made him a still more difficult figure for the critics to pigeon-hole. His breezy optimism, his love of color, his disavowal of rule and method, — all are reflected in his wonderful work. One can mark his progress, his experiments, and at the same time his failures; but they are alike interesting, for the man is never commonplace.

At nearly fourscore years, despite physical infirmities, he seems not to know the conservatism of old age, and to be in his presence is to be with one who is always a pupil. It is not to be wondered at that he has long lived down the hostility of earlier critics and the neglect of the public, and has become to-day so well-beloved a figure in Paris and in his retreat in the south of France.

C. H. H.

NOTE. Since the Bulletin went to press the news of the death of M. Renoir has been cabled from Europe.

The Bequest of Dr. Green

UNDER the will of the late Dr. Samuel Abbott Green, of Groton, Massachusetts, the Museum has received many interesting examples of eighteenth century American furniture, among them several pieces of the first quality. One of these, a Georgian mirror, is illustrated opposite. It is hoped eventually to show these pieces against walls treated in the taste of the period whose simple beauty is now too easily forgotten. The death of Dr. Green breaks a notable link with the past of this city. Its official physician and later its mayor, Dr. Green's attention turned as time went on to history. He was the author of many historical papers, and for many years before his death he had been Vice-President of the Massachusetts Historical Society. His bequest to the Museum will commemorate here the name of a man of character who maintained an active interest in the affairs of the community during a long life.

Wednesday Conferences

THE following Conferences will be given in the Museum during the coming season:

December 3.

The Genius of Minoan Art. Mrs. Charles H. Hawes (Harriet A. Boyd), M. A., L. H. D.

December 10.

Greek Bronzes. Professor George H. Chase, Ph. D., Curator of Classical Antiquities, Harvard University.

December 17.

Praxiteles and his Followers. Professor Chase.

December 31.

Thoughts for St. Silvester's Day. Benjamin Ives Gilman, A. M., Secretary of the Museum.

January 7.

Eighteenth Century French Drawings. Professor Paul J. Sachs, A. B., Assistant Director of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.

January 14.

American Silver. Mrs. Henri Léon Berger (Florence V. Paull), General Curator, Wadsworth Athenaeum, Hartford, Conn.

January 21.

Angels of the Renaissance. Mr. Gilman.

January 28.

The Tapestries in the Tapestry Gallery. Mrs. Charles W. Townsend (Sarah G. Flint), Advisor to the Department of Textiles.

February 4.

Chinese Bronzes. Francis Stewart Kershaw, A. M., Keeper in the Department of Chinese and Japanese Art.

February 11.

Civic Art as Revealed in Greek Coins. Mrs. Hawes.

February 18.

The Italian Primitive Paintings in the Museum. Edward Waldo Forbes, A. B., Director of the Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University.

February 25.

The International Style of Portrait Painting of the Latter Fifteenth and Early Sixteenth Centuries. Professor Arthur Pope, A. B., Harvard University.

March 3.

Lace. Mrs. Townsend.

March 10.

Chinese Pottery. Mr. Kershaw.

March 17.

Florentine Engravings. FitzRoy Carrington, Curator, Department of Prints.

Free tickets of admission are procurable in the following manner: Upon written application a ticket for a conference is issued ten days before the date of the conference if the application is accompanied by a stamped and addressed envelope. Applicants should therefore name the conferences which they wish to attend, enclosing an envelope for each conference for which a ticket is asked.

The number of tickets is limited to the seating capacity of the gallery in which the conference is to be held. The place of meeting will be posted on the Bulletin Board on the day of the conference.

The conferences begin at three o'clock. It is asked that the audiences be seated at that hour.

Applications for tickets should be made to Mr. Huger Elliott, Supervisor of Educational Work.